

2001 Session Survey

SENATOR

Harold Hochstatter

13th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT



These surveys are at best a picture in time. Issues change with increasing speed and magnitude. Last November, voters gave teachers annual cost-of-living increases and also cut property taxes that helped fund schools. The economy ran into an environmental brick wall when fish, nuclear waste and green house gasses curtailed growth in power productions.

This year, 2001, is a budget year. I ask for your help and direction for the coming months to prioritize issues that the state will be dealing with. Often, the options given to you in these surveys do not include constituents' creative viewpoints. Please feel free to write all over this thing in your attempt to inform me of your opinions. As government impacts your family, home and business, I need to know what helps and what hurts.

Your Servant,

Harold Hochstatter
State Senator, 13th District

Senate Assignments...

Committees:

- ◆ Education
- ◆ Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions
- ◆ Rules

Special Committees:

- ◆ Senate Select Committee on Water Policy
- ◆ Joint Select Committee on Education Restructuring
- ◆ Eastern Washington Caucus

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Legislative information via the Internet: <http://www.leg.wa.gov>

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2001 Legislative Survey

Shade circles like this: ●

Not like this: ⊗



State budget

1. In 2001, the Legislature faces some tough choices regarding the state budget's long-term future. About \$720 million is required to maintain existing programs. The state currently has about \$582 million in its Emergency Reserve Fund balance and another \$480 million in its budget surplus, but once that money is spent it is gone for good. What should the Legislature do in light of the increased spending requirements?

Voter 1 Voter 2

- ☐ ☐ A. Privatize many state services to help reduce spending
- ☐ ☐ B. Reduce spending for other state services and keep overall state spending at about the same rate as it's been over the past few years
- ☐ ☐ C. Save money through ending bilingual education; ending taxpayer-funded abortions; ending sex education classes; end state benefits to same-sex partners
- ☐ ☐ D. Spend the state budget surplus and emergency reserve fund to pay for the increased spending
- ☐ ☐ E. Other _____

2. Which tax do you consider to be the most onerous on you and your family?

Voter 1 Voter 2

- ☐ ☐ A. Sales Tax
- ☐ ☐ B. Business & Occupation Tax
- ☐ ☐ C. Property Tax
- ☐ ☐ D. Federal Income Tax

Education

3. Should individual students, their parents and their teachers be allowed to see the results of the Washington Assessment on Student Learning (WASL)?



Sen. Hochstatter banters with a group of students who recently visited the state capitol in Olympia.

Voter 1 Voter 2

- ☐ ☐ A. Yes
- ☐ ☐ B. No

4. Should it be mandatory that your child's report card include or reflect his or her achievement on the WASL?

Voter 1 Voter 2

- ☐ ☐ A. Yes
- ☐ ☐ B. No
- ☐ ☐ C. What's a WASL?

5. If qualified professionals, such as scientists or mathematicians, have ample experience in their field, should they be allowed to teach in classrooms if they take a course in basic class management?

Voter 1 Voter 2

- ☐ ☐ A. Yes
- ☐ ☐ B. No

6. Are you in favor of having a choice as to where your children attend school? (Public, private, charter, home school, or public schools in other districts?)

Voter 1 Voter 2

- ☐ ☐ A. Yes
- ☐ ☐ B. No

7. The rapidly growing practice of home schooling is saving tax money and providing reasonable GED scores. Should home schoolers be allowed to keep a portion of their property tax to offset the expense of teaching their own children?

Voter 1 Voter 2

- ☐ ☐ A. Yes
- ☐ ☐ B. No

8. The people of California ended bilingual education by passing Prop 227 by a vote of 61 percent. This has resulted in higher achievement for minority language speakers. Should Washington State also abandon bilingual education and pursue total emersion in English for all students?

Voter 1 Voter 2

- ☐ ☐ Yes
- ☐ ☐ No

Elections

9. A recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling means that Washington will have to eliminate its blanket primary system, in which primary voters have been free to vote for either a Republican or Democrat or some other party candidate throughout their ballots. (In other words, voters could pick a Republican in one race, a Democrat in another race, and so on.) How do you think the Legislature should deal with this situation?

Voter 1 Voter 2

- ☐ ☐ A. Adopt an open primary system in which voters choose either a Republican or Democrat ballot but are not required to register with a political party (meaning voters can choose only Republicans or only Democrats)

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- ☐ ☐ B. Adopt a closed primary system in which voters must register as either a Republican or Democrat and they receive a ballot listing only those candidates running for office in the party with which they are registered
- ☐ ☐ C. Leave our blanket primary in place

Health Care

10. Health Care costs are skyrocketing. Many think this is because there are too many people eating up your health care dollars. The money you spend on health care should go to:

Voter 1 Voter 2

- ☐ ☐ A. bureaucrats
- ☐ ☐ B. lawyers
- ☐ ☐ C. insurance companies
- ☐ ☐ D. none of the above
- ☐ ☐ E. Other _____

Snake River dams

11. There are proposals advocating breaching, or partially removing, the four dams on the lower Snake River in Washington as a way to save wild salmon on the river. Which of the following best fits your view?

Voter 1 Voter 2

- ☐ ☐ A. The Snake River dams should be breached
- ☐ ☐ B. The Snake River dams should not be breached
- ☐ ☐ C. More studies should be done to examine other causes of declining salmon populations before deciding whether the Snake River dams should be breached
- ☐ ☐ D. Other _____

Accountability

12. Non-elected bureaucrats (specifically DSHS, L&I, DOE) have too much power at their disposal. Constitutional accountability measures designed to protect the taxpayer (if they do wrong, vote them out) don't apply to agency officials. Agency rules now fill twelve volumes! Should the Legislature restore accountability by:

Voter 1 Voter 2

- ☐ ☐ A. Limit an agency's ability to draft rules by allowing this to happen only when the legislature is in session
- ☐ ☐ B. Require more public input, written and oral, before an agency can draft a new rule
- ☐ ☐ C. Institute a one-year moratorium on all agencies in regards to making new rules

- ☐ ☐ D. Require any new agency rule that spends taxpayer dollars to be approved by the Legislature first
- ☐ ☐ E. When a new law is passed by the Legislature (RCW), limit an agency's ability to draft rules (WAC) based on that law to one year
- ☐ ☐ F. All of the above
- ☐ ☐ F. None of the above
- ☐ ☐ G. Other _____

A new state?

13. Many people in Oregon and Washington believe the Cascade Mountains make a more definitive boundary than the Columbia River, for geographical as well as political reasons. Some think that it might make sense for Eastern Washington to join Eastern Oregon, and Western Washington should join Western Oregon. Should we have a commission to study this possibility?

Voter 1 Voter 2

- ☐ ☐ Yes
- ☐ ☐ No

Transportation - is there such a thing as a Free Ride?

14. Ferrys must pay 60 percent of their total operating costs with revenue from coin box and pre-paid fares. Should transit be required to do the same (currently running at about 18 percent, with taxpayers picking up the rest)?

Voter 1 Voter 2

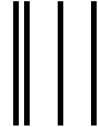
- ☐ ☐ Yes
- ☐ ☐ No

Privacy

15. In the "information age," personal privacy is everywhere threatened. Banks fail to shred paper, exposing your personal information to hackers; the federal government requires the misuse of Social Security numbers for reasons not related to Social Security; and businesses sell buying-pattern information without the knowledge or consent of consumers. Who should control the content and sharing of information?

Voter 1 Voter 2

- ☐ ☐ A. state government
- ☐ ☐ B. Social Security Administration
- ☐ ☐ C. you - the consumer
- ☐ ☐ D. Businesses gathering the information
- ☐ ☐ E. Other _____



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Grant County PUD needs lesson in “wholesale” definition

Last year, as the ranking Republican on the Energy, Telecommunications and Technology Committee, I worked for the passage of Senate Bill 6675 which allowed ports and PUD’s to sell space on the fiber optic network they were building for their own load management and meter reading purposes. That bill grants *wholesale* authority only. There must be a retail telephone, Internet, or cable provider between the Port or PUD, and the end-user, whether it is a business or a home. At the passing of last year’s wholesale authority bill I thought everyone, including myself, understood the difference between wholesale and retail transactions. But here’s what happened.

Grant County PUD began to charge the end-user \$40 a month to connect to their network. In keeping with the new law, Grant County PUD required a retail provider to “light the fiber.” This retail provider charged a fee to the end user

along with the \$40 PUD fee. But here’s the rub: I contend this two fee system constitutes two transactions; one a LEGAL RETAIL transaction between the end user and the provider, the other an ILLEGAL RETAIL transaction between the end-user and the PUD.

So what do I want? I want the Ports and the PUD’s to act legally. Charge the \$40, or a fraction, to the providers and allow them to pass it through to the end-user. That is all I contend for. But the controversy is helpful in understanding the law, the PUD actions, and my objections. So now let’s agree on some things. First, let’s agree that rural areas aren’t going to get bandwidth any time soon without the participation of Ports and PUD’s. Second, Ports and PUD’s have a vested interest in building a fiber network for their own needs and with huge capacity to spare. Third, competition at the retail level will provide the best service and is the

greatest incentive to utilize the excess bandwidth built into the PUD network.

Bluntly, the issue is merely this: can any transaction with an end-user be a wholesale transaction? By definition, it cannot. I continually and actively contend for wholesale telecom authority for Ports and PUD’s. So, can Grant County PUD provide their excellent service and still not break the law? I believe they can. Douglas County PUD understands wholesale transactions and is building their network within the constraints of Senate Bill 6675. Grant County PUD can too.

But I don’t want to use a hammer to kill an ant. Verizon’s original bill was such a hammer. The latest rewrite moves the argument in the right direction. But I don’t want to kill this golden goose of PUD-provided bandwidth. I just want that goose to stop hissing and obey the law.

2001 LEGISLATIVE SURVEY INSIDE...

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